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GAIUS BRUTTIUS DEDICATEE OF PHILODEMUS IN A HERCULANEUM PAPYRUS

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GAIUS BRUTTIUS DEDICATEE OF PHILODEMUS IN A HERCULANEUM PAPYRUS*

PHerc. 89/1301/1383 contains a badly-preserved theological work by Philodemus, of whose title only a few traces can be read.¹ In a very fragmentary column of the treatise (col. 11, 2),² I have been able to read the sequence $\lambda\omega\gamma\alpha\epsilon\beta\rho\upsilon\tau\tau\iota\epsilon$, which is also clearly visible in the multispectral image of the papyrus (Fig. 1). At the left-edge of the piece (*PHerc.* 89, cr 3 pz 1), there is a handle compatible with the right side of an *omega*, then the vertical stroke of a *gamma*, whose horizontal is lost; at the end of the line, an upper curved fleck of ink, very well compatible with an *epsilon*, is visible in a fold of the papyrus. The letters immediately after this sequence belong to a different layer (*sovrapposto*), whose profile is marked in Figure 1. The resulting sequence is $\delta\epsilon\ \Gamma\acute{\alpha}\iota\epsilon\ \text{Br}\acute{\upsilon}\tau\tau\iota\epsilon$: the vocative case seems to suggest an apostrophe addressed by Philodemus to a certain Gaius Bruttius, an otherwise unknown man. Unfortunately, the lines that follow are too fragmentary to interpret the context in which the name is mentioned.

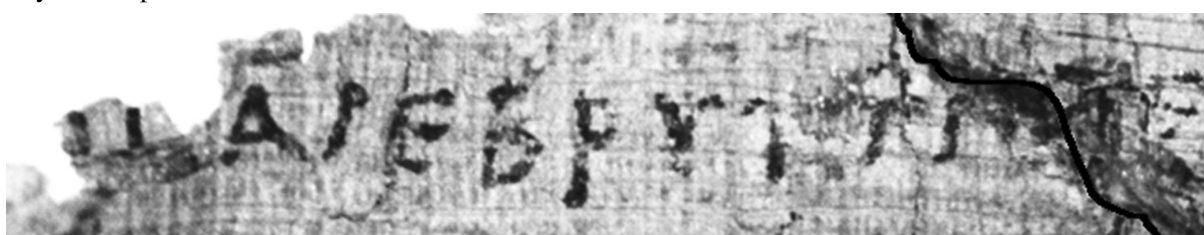


Fig. 1. Detail of *PHerc.* 89/1301/1383, col. 11, 2 (*PHerc.* 89, cr 3 pz 1). The image of *PHerc.* 89 is reproduced by courtesy of the Ministero della Cultura © Biblioteca Nazionale di Napoli; all rights are reserved.

The rarity of this name in the *Lexicon of Greek Personal Names (LGPN)*³ is not surprising, since it is the Greek form of a Latin name. Bruttius was the name of a *gens* attested during the late Republic and into imperial times. The name probably derives from *Bruttium* (the modern region of Calabria, Southern Italy);⁴ the numerous inscriptions referring to this *gens* found in Southern Italy, particularly in Lucania and Campania, are also indicative of its Italic origin.⁵ Inscriptions dating from the 3rd to the 1st centuries BCE only provide us with a mere few examples of the *gens Bruttia*. The earliest mention of a C. Bruttius in Latin is found in a dedication to Aesculapius in Rome that goes back to the end of the 3rd and the beginning of the 2nd century BCE.⁶ In the Republican age Bruttii holding political offices are rare;⁷ the inscriptions

* I would like to express my sincere appreciation to Prof. Giuseppe Camodeca for kindly offering to read this paper. Any errors in the text remain my own.

¹ For the reading of the *subscriptio*, see D'Angelo 2018, pp. 123–130. The edition of this scroll represents the topic of my doctoral thesis.

² I follow the progressive numbering in Arabic numbers as provided in my forthcoming edition. It does not include the most external part of the scroll (*scorze*) preserved in *PHerc.* 1301, due to their extreme fragmentation; therefore col. 11 is not one of the first columns of the treatise.

³ In *LGPN online*, the anthroponym $\text{Br}\acute{\upsilon}\tau\tau\iota\omicron\varsigma$ is mentioned only once at Velia between mid. 3rd–mid. 2nd BCE (IV–III BCE): see Vecchio 2003, pp. 112 s. n. 34 = EDR132523.

⁴ It is a common opinion that the *gentilicium* derived from the name of the region's inhabitants, but it remains dubious: right on Bruttius, see Schulze 1904, p. 524 n. 1, and Camodeca 1982, pp. 152–154.

⁵ A *buccherio* from Nocera (Campania) provides the most ancient attestation (ca. mid-6th BCE) of the *nomen gentilicium* in proto-Italic alphabet: *bruties esum* (see Rix 2002, p. 71, Ps 4). On the *gens Bruttia*, see Henze 1897, 911–915, and Camodeca 1982.

⁶ CIL I² 27 = CIL VI 30843, updated at p. 4140 = EDR128081.

⁷ Literary and epigraphic sources dating back to the Republican age on the Bruttii have been collected by Nicolet 1974, p. 805, and, more systematically, by Deniaux 1993, pp. 470–471. By querying the online epigraphic databases *EDR* = *Epigraphic Database Roma* (<http://www.edr-edr.it/default/index.php>) and *EDCS* = *Epigraphik-Datenbank Clauss/Slaby* (<http://www.manfredclauss.de/>), it is possible to further enrich this documentation by adding three more cases (beyond those mentioned in the text from Trebula Suffenas): at Capena (Rome), a C(aius) Bruttius 'Q(uinti) f(ilius)' is attested in an inscription dating to 25 BCE–25 CE (Bull. Comm. Arch. Com. Roma, 106/2005, pp. 183–185, nr. 10 = EDR143326); a P(ublius) Brut'ius is attested at Fossa (L'Aquila) between 70–31 BCE (CIL IX 3621 = CIL I² 1809 = EDR175654); and finally, a L(ucius) Brutius is mentioned in an inscription from Fabrateria Nova (S. Giovanni Incarico, Frosinone), dating to 50 BCE–50 CE (CIL X

dating back to 1st BCE with the *praenomen* Gaius/Caius only attest to a C. Bruttius *aedilis pro quaestore* (Grumentum, Lucania, 57 BCE), whose family was originally from Marsica,⁸ and a C. Bruttius, probably a *quinquennalis*, at Trebula Suffenas near Rome (1st BCE–1st CE).⁹

Research into the literary sources offers a more interesting example: in one of Cicero's letters to his friends, there is a mention of an individual named Bruttius. Cicero does not give us the *praenomen* for this Bruttius, but he was the professor of rhetoric who taught Cicero's son, Marcus Tullius Cicero the Younger, in Athens in 44 BCE. Here is an excerpt of the letter (Cic., *Ad. fam.* XVI 21, 4–5):

Nam quid ego de Bruttio dicam, quem nullo tempore a me patior discedere? cuius cum frugi severaque est vita tum etiam iucundissima convictio; non est enim seiunctus iocus a philologia et cottidiana συζητήσεαι. huic ego locum in proximo conduxī et, ut possum, ex meis angustiis illius sustento tenuitatem. praeterea declamitare Graece apud Cassium institui, Latine autem apud Bruttium exerceri volo.

“As for Bruttius, what can I say? I never let him out of my sight. He lives simply and strictly, and he is the best of company too. Fun goes hand in hand with literary study and daily disputation. I have rented a lodging for him near mine, and as he is a poor man, I help him as best I can out of my own meagre funds. Also I have started regular declamation in Greek with Cassius, and I want to practise in Latin with Bruttius.” (Transl. Shackleton Bailey)

The letter is written by the young Marcus¹⁰ to Tiro in order to inform him about his studies and his teachers in Athens, where he was sent by his father to study under the Peripatetic Cratippus. Marcus mentions Cratippus, then Bruttius with whom he would like to practice declamation in Latin (*Latine autem apud Bruttium exerceri volo*).

However, no further information is available on this Bruttius except for what we know from Cicero's letter.¹¹ The rarity of this *nomen gentilicium* in the Roman age, together with the friendship this individual had with Cicero's family, might possibly suggest that he was related to another Bruttius, who is also mentioned in the *Letters to friends*. This figure is a certain Lucius Bruttius, a young *eques*, and intimate friend of Cicero, for whom the orator wrote a letter of introduction to Manius Acilius Glabrio, who was proconsul in Sicilia in 46/45 BCE (*Ad fam.* XIII 38 *L. Bruttius, eques Romanus, adulescens omnibus rebus ornatus, in meis familiarissimis*).

I find the hypothesis put forward by Nicolet in 1974¹² (and supported by Deniaux in 1993),¹³ that these two figures can be identified as a single individual Bruttius, unconvincing. Nicolet argued that the young Bruttius, who was with Cicero in Rome in 46/45 BCE (XIII 38 *nunc ipse Bruttius Romae mecum est*), would therefore have accompanied Cicero's son in his study period in Athens in 44 BC. Yet this interpretation was questioned by Shackleton Bailey, who opportunely noticed that the Lucius Bruttius mentioned in *Ad fam.* XIII 38 was a young man (*adulescens*), while the Bruttius who is mentioned without a *praenomen* in *Ad fam.* XVI 21 was “a professor in Athens, not a student like Cicero junior”.¹⁴ Furthermore, one should point out that the former was a member of the equestrian order, with an estate (*sed tamen domum eius et rem familiarem et procuratores tibi sic commendo*). In contrast, the latter was a poor man, lacking of financial resources (*frugi severaque est vita ... meis angustiis illius sustento tenuitatem*). Coupling these reasons

5606 = EDR126973). Brutti holding offices as magistrates are not mentioned in Broughton 1951, 1952, 1960, and 1991, with the exception of the *legatus* Quintus Bruttius Sura (see Broughton 1952, pp. 15–16).

⁸ CIL I² 758 = CIL X 219 = ILLRP 608 = EDCS-11400305.

⁹ Suppl. It. 4, pp. 117–240, nr. 38 = EDR020624.

¹⁰ On Marcus Tullius Cicero jr., see Balsdon/Griffin 2012.

¹¹ See Shackleton Bailey 2001, p. 337: “Nothing more known, but no doubt an Italian”; Klebs 1897, 911: “Ein armer, lateinischer Schulmeister in Athen.”

¹² Nicolet 1974, p. 805. See also Silvestrini 1994, p. 83, and Russo/Gargano/Di Giuseppe 2007, pp. 106–107.

¹³ Deniaux 1993, pp. 470–471.

¹⁴ Shackleton Bailey 1995, p. 23, s.v. Bruttius, L. (eques); see also Cavarzere 2016², p. 1424.

with the chronological proximity of the two figures, I would assume more cautiously that they might be at most related to each other but cannot be easily identified.

In my opinion, the content of the letter is worthy of a more detailed and accurate examination than it has so far received. Bruttius is mentioned by Marcus as being one of his teachers, who are largely rhetoricians and philosophers. Although he is not explicitly connected to a philosophical school, there are good reasons to assume that the characterization of this individual is typically epicurean: he is described as a man with a simple and austere lifestyle (*frugi severaque est vita*), who merrily takes part in *philologia* and in *cottidiana* συζητήσει. The use of the Greek term συζητήσις in order to indicate the “daily disputation”¹⁵ cannot but evoke the Epicurean philosophical tradition, whose teaching methodology and practice was based on shared research. Moreover, the noun is a technical term from the lexicon of Epicurus, who first used it (*GV 74 ἐν φιλολόγῳ συζητῆσει πλεῖον ἤνυεν ὁ ἡττηθεὶς καθ’ ὃ προσέμαθεν*).¹⁶

Furthermore, the description of Bruttius’ personality fits well with an Epicurean context. He is presented as a delightful man to live with (*iucundissima convictio*) and to share daily research: this is a topic which goes well with the Epicurean relationship between the two concepts of progress in knowledge and *φιλία*, or the bond of friendship.¹⁷ Also the pleasantness of a person’s character (*iucunditas*) is a typical feature of the Roman Epicureans of Cicero’s circle of friends. The best-known example of this is Papirius Paetus, who was a follower of Epicureanism living in Naples. Paetus was a close friend of Cicero and the orator wrote twelve letters to him (*Ad fam.* IX 15–26), describing him as a learned, brilliant, and witty man, lover of the quiet life and good food, but without excesses, in accordance with the Epicurean life-style.¹⁸

If this interpretation is correct, then Bruttius might have been sympathetic to Epicureanism and had moved from Italy to Athens. The absence of any other information does not allow us to speculate further, yet a few cautionary points may be put forward on the dates and potential age of Bruttius: we know from Marcus’ letter that Bruttius was his professor in Athens in 44 BCE; in that year Marcus was 21 years old, therefore, it is likely that Bruttius was older than him. One might wonder if Bruttius had also been involved in some way in the Epicurean school held by Zeno of Sidon in Athens from 110 to 75 BCE, which was attended by Philodemus, probably from 86/85 to 75 BCE,¹⁹ and also by Cicero and Atticus in 79/78 BCE.²⁰ However, that Bruttius was an ἀκουστής of Zeno remains a mere hypothesis.

¹⁵ In the part of the letter to Tiro that follows this section, Cicero jr. shows off other terms and expressions in Greek. The use of the Greek language in Cicero’s *Ad familiares* is common especially in the informal letters sent to addressees who were well-read and able to get the hint and the reference context: see Garbarino 2004, esp. pp. 74–75. On the use of Greek in Cicero’s correspondence, I refer to the bibliography collected by Cugusi 1998, p. 166 n. 8.

¹⁶ The passage from Epicurus was already noticed by Shackleton Bailey 1977, p. 337. A lexical similarity among the sequence φιλόλογος συζητήσις and the expression *philologia et cottidiana* συζητήσις used by Cicero jr. can be observed. Before Epicurus, the verb συζητέω is attested in Plato, *Men.* 80d 4 and 90b 5, with the general meaning of “search or examine together with, τινι” (LSJ, s.v.). In the surviving corpus of Epicurean texts, the term is used also by Philodemus in his work *De ira*, with reference to the benefits to be gained from shared research (*PHerc.* 182, col. XIX 26 Indelli, μήτε [τ]οῦ | διὰ συζητήσεως μετέχειν ἀγαθοῦ). See also Gigante 1983², esp. pp. 100–101.

¹⁷ In the Epicurean conception of the philosophical education of young people, the teaching practice based on the shared research was strictly connected to the topics of ὁμιλία, society, and παρρησία, speaking frankly, to which Philodemus dedicated respectively the treatises *Περὶ ὁμιλίας* (*PHerc.* 873) and *Περὶ παρρησίας* (*PHerc.* 1471); see Gigante 1974, p. 37; Amoroso 1975, p. 63.

¹⁸ No information is available to us on Papirius Paetus other than what we know from the letters written by Cicero. His closeness to Epicureanism is expressed by Cicero in *Ad fam.* IX 25, 2, where the Epicureans are described as his *combibones* (*in iis controversiis quas habeo cum tuis combibonibus Epicuri <i>s*). On the letters to Paetus, see Della Valle 1935², pp. 154–169, D’Arms 1970, pp. 191–192, Castner 1988, pp. 43–44, Cavarzere 2016², p. 852, and Leach 1999, esp. pp. 69–177. On the other Neapolitan Epicureans who were close to Cicero, see Della Valle 1935², pp. 147–169; some of them, who were owners of villas in Campania, are also mentioned in the final catalogue by D’Arms 1970. A recent study on the epistolary interactions and contact between Cicero and the Roman Epicureans is offered by Gilbert 2015; see also his summary table at pp. 112–115.

¹⁹ Philodemus’ arrival in Athens in 86/85 BCE was proposed by Fleischer 2018, esp. p. 125 ss. His move to Italy in 75 BCE is the commonly accepted date: see Gigante 1990, pp. 30–31, and 2001, esp. p. 30; Longo Auricchio/Indelli/Leone/Del Mastro 2020, pp. 156–157.

²⁰ Cic., *Fin.* I 5, 16, *Nat. deor.* I 59, *Acad. Post.* I 46. On the Epicurean school held by Zeno of Sidon in Athens, see the collection of fragments of Zenon in Angeli/Colaizzo 1979; for Philodemus’ close relationship with Zeno and his doctrines see also Del Mastro 2014.

Nevertheless, it is clearly true that the Bruttius mentioned by Cicero the Younger as being his professor was a contemporary of Philodemus, a fact that supports the hypothesis that he might be the same Bruttius mentioned in the Herculaneum treatise. In this case, however, it would remain uncertain when and where they might have come into contact with each other and whether they might already have met in Athens before 75 BCE, that is before the arrival of Philodemus in Italy. In the other known cases of Philodemus' dedications,²¹ the dedicatee is someone with whom the author was in contact during the writing of the particular work;²² considering this practice, a meeting in Athens before this date would suggest that the composition of this work was prior to the time when Philodemus is commonly assumed to have begun writing, that is in or shortly before 75 BCE, unless one wants to assume that their interaction, which began in Athens, continued in Italy after 75 BCE. However, it is also possible that their meeting can be traced back to the period after Philodemus arrived in Italy.

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²¹ On the dedications in the Herculaneum papyri, see Gigante 1984, pp. 127–128, Dorandi 1982, p. 43 n. 44, and 1990, p. 70 n. 65. A more recent overview on the dedicatee's role in the Epicureans' treatises has been offered by De Sanctis 2011, esp. pp. 226–229 on Philodemus' dedications to members of the Roman aristocracy. At present, three works by Philodemus certainly preserve a dedication (always expressed in the vocative case): *De rhetorica* book IV, dedicated to Gaius Vibius Pansa Caetronianus (ὁ Γάϊε Πάαν'ς'α, *PHerc.* 1007, col. XLIIa 5 Sudhaus, p. 223, with Dorandi 1996), a politician, consul of the Roman Republic in 43 BCE, and an Epicurean sympathizer; *De bono rege secundum Homerum* (*PHerc.* 1507), dedicated to his Roman *patronus* Lucius Calpurnius Piso Caesoninus (ὁ Πείλκω, col. XLIII 16–17 Dorandi; Dorandi 1982, pp. 42–44); *De vitiis* (*PHerc.Paris.* 2), dedicated to Virgil and to his circle's poets Plotius Tucca, Lucius Varius Rufus, and Quintilius Varus (fr. 278b and 279a, ὁ Πλώτιε καὶ Οὐάτρ[ι]ε καὶ Οὐεργ[ί]λιε καὶ Κοιντ[ί]λιε; see Gigante/Capasso 1989; see also Delattre 2004, pp. 1382–1384, and Delattre 2018, p. 114); Philodemus dedicated more than one book of the work *De vitiis* to the four Augustan poets as revealed by the presence of the same dedication also in the *incisioni* of *PHerc.* 253 (*De vitiis*, *VH²* VII 196, fr. 12, 4–5), and of *PHerc.* 1082 (*De adulatione*, *VH²* I 92, col. XI, 3–4), neither of these are preserved in the original: see Gigante 1984, pp. 71–74, and Dorandi/Spinelli 1990, p. 55. In contrast, the presence of dedications in *De poematis* has been ruled out by the revision of the original: the presumed dedication of *De poematis* book IV to a certain Gnaeus (Γναίε), identified by Sbordone with Gnaeus Calpurnius Piso, consul in 23 BCE, was due to an erroneous reading (see Sbordone 1969, fr. 8a, 8, with commentary at p. 345), which has been corrected in the new edition of the scroll by Janko (see Janko 2011, col. 108, 15, with commentary at p. 159); similarly the name Καλπούρ[ι]νιε in *De poematis* book V, proposed by Philippson (Philippson 1938, 2457), cannot be confirmed (on this point, see Mangoni 1993, comm. to col. III 19, p. 188).

²² We do not know to which phase of Philodemus' philosophical production this work dates to. The writing is not included in the palaeographical groups identified by Cavallo 1983.

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